

CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
Planning and Development Services Department
MEMORANDUM

TO: PDS Associates

FROM: Roderick Sanchez, Director and Building Official

DATE: June 8, 2010

INTERPRETATION NUMBER: CI2010-010

TITLE: Definition of Habitable Attic

CODE EDITION: 2009 *International Residential Code* (IRC) as amended by COSA

SECTION: Chapter 2, Definitions of Attic and Habitable Attic

QUESTION 1: For an attic to be considered a Habitable Attic does it have to meet all three requirements contained in the following definition found in Chapter 2?

Attic, Habitable. A finished or unfinished area, not considered a *story*, complying with all of the following requirements:

1. The occupiable floor area is at least 70 square feet (17 m²) in accordance with Section R304,
2. The occupiable floor area has a ceiling height in accordance with Section R305,
3. The occupiable space is enclosed by the roof assembly above, knee walls (if applicable) on the sides, and the floor-ceiling assembly below.

ANSWER 1: Yes. In addition, the space must be 1) designed and/or intended to be used as an "occupiable space" as defined by the 2009 *International Building Code* and 2) accessed from either a door with a minimum height of 6 ft. 6 in. (1981 mm) or from permanently constructed stairs complying with Section R311.7 in order to be classified as a Habitable Attic. Should access to the space only be made from a pull down set of stairs or from an access panel in the wall or ceiling, the attic space shall not be considered as a Habitable Attic.

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QUESTION 2: If an attic does not meet all three requirements listed in the definition above, is it considered a Habitable Attic?

ANSWER 2: No.

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QUESTION 3: If an attic does not have a floor-ceiling assembly below, does it meet the third requirement for a Habitable Attic?

ANSWER 3: No.

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Note: Any attic served by fixed stairs and/or doors with a minimum height of 6 ft. 6 in. (1981 mm) is required to be designed with a minimum uniformly distributed live load of thirty (30) pounds per square foot per Table R301.5.



Roderick J. Sanchez, A.I.C.P., C.B.O.
Director and Building Official
Planning and Development Services Department